

Harford Cable Network Board Bylaws

Approved by Harford County Council on 1/10/12

A. Membership

The Harford Cable Network (HCN) Board (Board) is an agency of the County Council. The Board consists of at minimum 15 members appointed by the County Council: 7 citizen representatives, 1 appointed by each Council member; a representative of Harford Community College recommended by the President of Harford Community College; a member of the County Council, who is an ex officio, nonvoting member; a citizen representative recommended by the County Executive; a representative of Aberdeen recommended by the City Council; a representative of Bel Air recommended by the Town Commissioners; a representative of Havre de Grace recommended by the City Council; and a representative of each cable franchise serving Harford County.

B. Meetings

The Board shall meet at least 6 times a year, at the times and places it determines. Robert's Rules of Order, current edition, shall govern parliamentary proceedings except where they conflict with these rules.

C. Quorum

A majority of voting members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

D. Absences and Alternates

1. Unless the absences are explained to the satisfaction of the Board, a member with unexcused absences for 3 or more consecutive Board meetings is deemed to have resigned, and the Board shall notify the County Council of the resignation. Within 60 calendar days after receiving the notice, the Council shall appoint a replacement for the member. If the Council fails to appoint a replacement member within 60 calendar days, the Board may recommend an appointee to fill the existing vacancy to the Council, which recommendation must be approved by the Council.
2. The members of the Board representing Harford Community College and the cable operators on which HCN is carried may appoint alternates to represent them at Board meetings if the members are unable to attend a meeting. Attendance by an alternate shall constitute an excused absence for the member. The appointed alternate shall serve as a voting member of the Board in the same manner as the member and shall therefore be entitled to vote and speak at a meeting. An alternate may only participate in 3 Board meetings per year.

E. Chairman and Vice-Chairman

By July 1 the Board shall select a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among its members and the Chairman shall be responsible for:

1. Conducting Board meetings.
2. Ensuring that all grant applications prepared by the Executive Director are submitted to and approved by the Board.
3. Ensuring that the Executive Director provides all budgetary information and reports for approval by the Board that are to be submitted to the County Council.
4. Providing general guidance to HCN employees in areas related to production and broadcast of HCN programs.
5. Meeting with the Administrator of the Council to:
 - a. Discuss the job performance of the Executive Director of HCN, and
 - b. Conduct the annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director.

If the Chairman is absent or unable to fulfill these responsibilities, the Vice-Chairman shall assume all the responsibilities of the Chairman.

F. Secretary

The Secretary of the Board shall be responsible for:

1. Circulating meeting agendas to all members of the Board.
2. Keeping all documents and records received by the Board.
3. Taking and transcribing the minutes of the Board and Sub-Committee meetings.

G. Executive Director

1. The HCN Executive Director shall be responsible for the management of HCN in accordance with the policies approved by the Board.
2. By November 1 of each year, the HCN Executive Director shall prepare the annual budget and present it to the Board for approval.
3. The HCN Executive Director shall establish rules and adopt regulations for the use of HCN programming subject to the approval by the Board.

H. Prohibited Subject Matters

HCN will not broadcast:

1. Any advertisement that promotes a lottery, gift, enterprise or similar scheme that offers prizes awarded on the basis of chance (as prohibited under 47 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 76-213).
2. Any Program or advertisement that directly or indirectly solicits funds from the cable subscribers, unless specifically authorized by the Board.

3. Any material which is deemed obscene under applicable law. The Board or the HCN Executive Director may prescreen or take other appropriate steps to ensure that obscene material is not broadcast.
4. Any material which violates any federal or state statute.
5. Any commercial advertisement that promotes the sale of any product or service.

I. Editorial Control

The Harford Cable Network Board and the HCN Executive Director shall not exercise editorial control over the opinions expressed in any public, educational, or governmental program broadcast by HCN, except for programs that:

1. Are judged by the Board or the Executive Director as containing obscene or otherwise inappropriate subject matter or content as described in Section H above or in the HCN Production Guidelines.
2. Do not meet the technical quality or standards established and published by the Board in the Production Guidelines or Board publication..

J. Request for Broadcast Time

Any Harford County citizen may furnish a program to the Executive Director and request that the program be broadcast provided that:

1. The request for broadcast is made by application.
2. A citizen under the age of 18 making a request must have parental or guardian consent in writing.
3. The citizen obtains written releases from everyone featured on the program.
4. The request complies with the written standards for broadcast established by the Board.

K. Schedule of Fees

All fee schedules shall be approved by the Board and submitted to the County Council for approval. Copies of these schedules shall be made available to the public.

L. Donations

All funds received by the Board shall be turned over to the County Treasurer to be accounted for and expended in accordance with county budgetary procedures. All other gifts shall be made to Harford County, designating the Board as recipient.

M. Budget

The Executive Director shall annually prepare an operating budget to be approved by the Board for submittal to the County Council by November 1.

N. Operation Report

The Executive Director shall submit a report of its activities at the budget work session annually as approved by the Board to the County Council.

O. Legal Issues

The Board shall consult with the County Council Attorney or another attorney designated by the Council Attorney for any legal advice the Board requires. The Board shall take special care to assure that it seeks legal advice regarding its continued compliance with all Federal, State and local laws.

P. Broadcasts by Political Candidates

Political candidates for any elective public office or their representatives shall not have access to HCN unless they appear in a forum which all candidates have been given an opportunity to appear. This section does not apply to candidates who appear on HCN programming as part of a public meeting or to elected officials performing their public duties.

Q. Disclaimer

The Board and the County Council of Harford County shall not warrant the accuracy of any information cablecast over HCN. The opinions and views expressed in programs broadcast by HCN are not necessarily the opinions and views held by the Board or County Council. The Board reserves the right to show disclaimers for programs broadcast over HCN.

R. Amendment of Bylaws

The Board's bylaws may be amended provided that the amendments are approved by at least two-thirds of the Board members and a majority of the County Council.

S. County Law

As a Council Agency created under the laws of this County, the Board is subject to the provisions of the County Code. If there is a conflict between these bylaws and the County Code, the County Code shall supersede these bylaws.